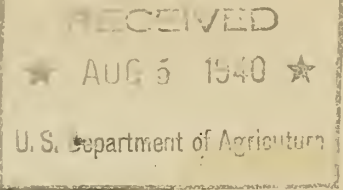


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IS WATER A FOOD?



A radio conversation between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Mr. Wallace Kadderly, Office of Information, broadcast Tuesday, June 18, 1940, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, by the National Broadcasting Company and a network of 87 associate radio stations.

---ooOoo---

WALLACE KADDERLY:

And now here's Ruth Van Deman with information for us again from the Bureau of Home Economics.

RUTH VAN DEMAN:

And I know you'll think it sounds queer, Wallace, but it's all answers to questions about water.

KADDERLY:

Water to drink?

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, that's one. Evidently the hot weather last week got people to discussing whether water is food whether it's all right to drink water with meals.

KADDERLY:

What do the scientists say about that? I'd like to know myself.

VAN DEMAN:

As usual they begin by making you say what you mean by food.

KADDERLY:

Water's certainly essential to human life.

VAN DEMAN:

It certainly is along with oxygen and foodstuffs. You've heard the definition of a human being, haven't you?

KADDERLY:

Which one? That is, which definition. I've heard several.

VAN DEMAN:

This one is credited to Dr. Anthony Blank. It goes something like this. If you're feeling optimistic man is just one notch lower than the angels. But if you're feeling gloomy about the world in general, then man is 10 gallons of water carbon for several hundred lead pencils phosphorus for 2000 or so matches iron for one nail

KADDERLY:

Maybe lime enough to whitewash the garden fence.

VAN DEMAN:

Something like that.

KADDERLY:

I'm sure if I whitewashed the garden fence on one of these hot humid Washington days, I would lose about 10 gallons of water out of my system.....

VAN DEMAN:

Six or seven pints is probably nearer it for the whole 24 hours -- and some of that goes off with the air from your lungs as "insensible perspiration".

KADDERLY:

Insensible perspiration? I'm sensible of a lot of visible perspiration in this climate in summer.

VAN DEMAN:

But if we humans didn't have the kind of skin that made that possible, we'd have to pant the way some the animals do. I'd find that harder than mopping the chin.

KADDERLY:

True--quite true.....

And going back for a moment to that 6 or 7 pints of water we lose every day. That's the amount then we need to drink to keep the balance.

VAN DEMAN:

Some of it comes in food of course. Lots of our common foods are 50 per cent water.

KADDERLY:

Yes, a green salad or a bowl of soup would be higher than that.

VAN DEMAN:

So the amount of water you need to drink depends on the diet in general. Probably though most of us don't drink enough water.

KADDERLY:

But, Ruth, you haven't answered that question yet about drinking water at meals.

VAN DEMAN:

The nutrition experts say it's all right, in reason, if you don't do it just to wash food down and avoid chewing it properly.

With children of course you have to watch and see that they don't drink too much water or any other liquid early in the meal. With their limited stomach capacity, they wouldn't have room for solid food.

KADDERLY:

I remember reading that when Boulder Dam was under construction in the Southwest, the men were given salt in their drinking water to help them from being overcome with the heat. Did that have a scientific basis?

VAN DEMAN:

Oh yes, that's done in many industrial plants. It's to compensate for the salt you lose from the body in sweat.

I think we instinctively do the same thing at table in warm weather when we choose ham or some salty meat. We say it's more appetizing. The salt makes us drink more water. And it's a well known fact that if you don't get enough water, the appetite falls off. If carried to an extreme, that leads to under-nourishment. Again that's where you have to be careful with young children see to it that they get enough water to drink between meals.

There's a very interesting section on the function of water in human nutrition in the 1939 Yearbook - "Food and Life."

KADDERLY:

Written by one of the Bureau of Home Economics people?

VAN DEMAN:

Two of them. Dr. Booher and Mrs. Coons. They wrote the chapter on what the different food substances do for the body and the relation of food to health in all sorts of ways.

KADDERLY:

That whole book deserves a lot of study. It's very valuable reference.

VAN DEMAN:

Did you know the human nutrition part about 400 pages has been reprinted as a separate, so schools and anybody who's interested can buy it?

KADDERLY:

No. I didn't. How much does it sell for?

VAN DEMAN:

Forty cents. Just enough to cover the cost of press work and paper and ink.

KADDERLY:

Orders go to the Government Printing Office, I suppose.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes. Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office here in Washington.

KADDERLY:

(Ad lib.... if listeners wish to buy the 400 page book on human nutrition send money order for 40¢ to Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C.)

VAN DEMAN:

And here's a very different kind of a question about water, in connection with bath towels..... how to choose bath towels that will do a good job of absorbing water.

KADDERLY:

That ties in with using the cotton surplus.

VAN DEMAN:

Good-sized towels, you mean. Yes, that's one way.

KADDERLY:

And a soft towel, with lots of those little loops all over the surface.

VAN DEMAN:

A thick, soft pile that's right. But we'll have to let the Buying guides bulletin tell the rest of the story this time.

KADDERLY:

This free?

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, the new supply will be down from the printing office any moment now.

KADDERLY:

Ad lib offer of (Guides for Buying: Sheets, Blankets, Bath Towels)